R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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A STUDY OF THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM, FULL-DAY OR HALF-DAY.

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THE ROLE OF KINDERGARTEN IN THE FUTURE EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE IS PRESENTLY UNDERGOING REEVALUATION, ESPECIALLY IN THE PENN-TRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT OF HARRISON CITY, PENNSYLVANIA. THE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING KINDERGARTEN FROM A HALF-DAY TO A FULL-DAY PROGRAM IS A PRIME AREA OF DEBATE. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT MODERN SOCIETY WILL SOON, IF NOT IMMEDIATELY, DEMAND A KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM THAT PROVIDES A MORE CREATIVE, MORE SUBSTANTIAL CURRICULUM, WITH IMPROVED FACILITIES AND A TEACHER-ATTITUDE FOCUSING MORE ON INSTRUCTION THAN ON BABY-SITTING. A SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR A FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN AND A DELINEATION OF ITS GOALS IS PRESENTED IN THIS DOCUMENT. THESE ITEMS ARE BASED ON A PLAN DEVISED BY THE FORT MYER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA. THE ESTIMATED COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING SUCH A PROGRAM IN THE PENN-TRAFFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT ARE DISCUSSED. A STUDY DONE IN HAWAII, WHERE FULL-DAY KINDERGARTENS ARE THE RULE, COMPARES THE VALUE OF HALF-DAY SESSIONS TO FULL-DAY SESSIONS AND IS REPRODUCED IN THIS BROCHURE BECAUSE IT DISCUSSES MANY OF THE PROS AND CONS OF THE 2 TYPES OF KINDERGARTEN SESSIONS OF INTEREST TO THE PENN-TRAFFORD EDUCATORS. (WD)

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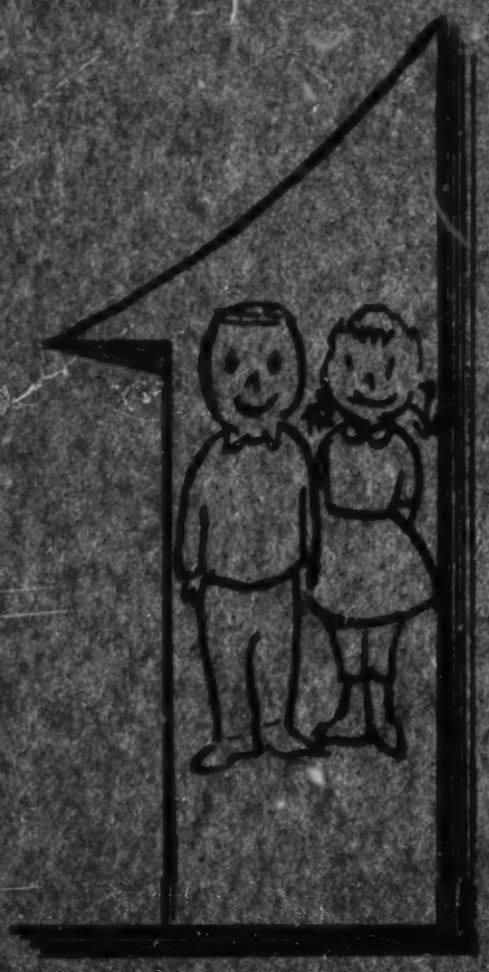

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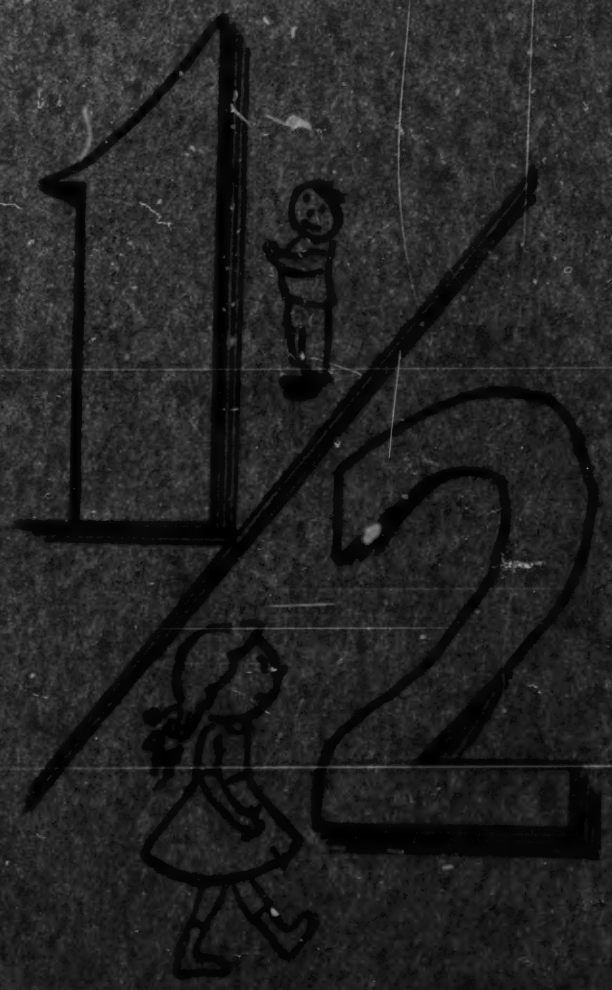

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A STUDY OF THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

FULL-DAY or HALF-DAY?

January 24, 1968

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INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten has been a part of American education, either private or public, for several generations. It has been looked upon primarily as a period of social adaptation to help the child make the transfer from the individualized over-protective atmosphere of the home to the group-oriented, sometimes impersonal, life of the school. Traditionally, kindergartens in the public school have been almost completely activity oriented and set up on a half-day basis. Some theories behind this concept have been: (1) "the child is not ready for formal learning," (2) "we don't want to interfere with first grade work," (3) "he will be too tired to spend more than a half-day in school," (4) "he needs his nap."

The European educational system for many years has been based upon an earlier starting age. Public education in the United States needs to take a close look at the educational and economic advantages of (a) an earlier starting age for formal education, and (b) full-day instead of half-day kindergartens.

The purpose of this brochure is to present the thinking of administrators, teachers, and others who have given consideration to establishment of full-day kindergartens. We shall attempt to analyze costs, study the advantages and disadvantages, and interpret the reaction of our own staff to the problem.

I. THE FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN, A DESCRIPTION

Kindergarten has always been considered a "play" time period of adjustment which gives the pre-school child an opportunity to prepare for the more rigidly disciplined life of the first grade classroom. Teachers have been trained to regard the kindergarten program in this way, and they have resisted attempts to bring formal education into their daily program. In recent years, there has been an acceptance of the idea that some academic training could be started before first grade, and so the readiness programs have gradually been worked into the local kin-ergarten curriculum.

The accelerated tempo of today's world, and the vast amount of knowledge that the educated man of tomorrow will have at his fingertips, have resulted in a "down-grading" of curriculum. The grade school child of today is exposed to scientific and mathematical data which, a generation ago, were part of the senior high school requirements. The ability of the child to acquire formal knowledge at an early age has been proven in European countries where the child starts to school one or two years earlier than American children. If we are going to require our children to acquire a greater core of detail at an earlier age, then we must consider exposing them to the basic elements of language and mathematics at an earlier age.

The full-day kindergarten, we feel, is the solution to this earlier starting age. An adjustment period to the regimen of the classroom is needed; therefore, the present activity-centered program will be continued; but it would be changed to meet different goals than some of the present activities.

Equipment used for individual or group exercise would require the creative, rather than the merely physical reaction, of the child. Swings, slides and see-saws would have little space in our curriculum. Mr. Asher B. Etkes, President of the Playground Corporation of America, said to the staff of Lacey, Washington School District:

> "Five basic characteristics are exhibited in child play; (1) uninhibitedness, (2) imagination, (3) energy, (4) very short spans of interest, and (5) ego building."

He also stated:

> ".....our children lose the interest in physical activity early in life because they are over-challenged and there is too much emphasis today on the good athlete....if they are successful, (in creating equipment to meet the needs of the child) our children will become adults with a continued physical interest and a concept of confidence."

Our kindergarten would have equipment which would create stages for play acting for the child with trees, rocks, shelters, and webs in various combinations. These playscapes would give every child an opportunity for success, either alone or as a part of a group.

A new experience for the full-day kindergarten child would be participation in the school lunch program. The act of eating together, sharing, table manners, and conversation with his peers is a learning experience that the small child rarely gets. His dining patterns at home place him as the youngest child in an adult-dominated atmosphere where the indulgent parent often contributes to poor nutritional habits which last for life. The cafeteria experience, in addition to its training in the social graces, provides a hot lunch for many children who otherwise would have a cold, nutritively deficient lunch, and also establishes good eating habits at an early age.

The academic program of a full-day kindergarten would include formal activities in language development, science, mathematics, social sciences, and music. Many of these areas are a part of present half-day programs, but the limitations of time make them very ineffective. The full-day program would permit regularly scheduled time segments with a well-defined pattern for developing activities to meet objectives in each subject area. At the end of the year, the full-day kindergarten child should be on an achievement level equal to the mid-year first grade child.

The Fort Myer Elementary School, Arlington, Virginia, in June, 1966, applied for a grant for "A Study of the Kindergarten Program for a Comparison of a Program Operating on a Full-day Basis with the Regular Half-day Program Now in Existence." The study was conducted during the school year 1966-1967 with a longitudinal follow-up of the children during the school year 1967-1968. The study is not completed at this date, therefore no statistical data is available, but the personal reaction of the people involved, according to Principal C. Gordon Higgins, "cause us to look more favorably on the full-day program."

The Daily Schedule proposed by the Fort Myers program could serve as a model for the full-day kindergarten:

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN
(This program is extremely flexible)

9:15 - 9:30	Arrival of buses and private vehicles
9:30 - 10:00	Organization time-snack and lunch money, roll, library books, pledge, group meeting Thurs. 9:30 - 10:10 - to library
10:00 - 10:20	Music, singing, rhythms, physical activities
10:20 - 11:00	Work period-social sciences, language arts, activity free play Tues. 10:30 - 10:45 - educational TV
11:00 - 11:15	Outside play
11:15 - 11:30	Story time - books, poems, dramatic expression
11:30 - 11:40	Preparation for lunch

11:40 - 11:45	Walk to cafeteria
11:45 - 12:15	Supervised lunch period
12:15 - 12:30	Tend to personal needs - drinks, bathroom, wash
12:30 - 1:00	Outside play or organized games inside
1:00 - 1:30	Rest or sleep - curtains drawn
1:30 - 2:00	Free play time (active or quiet), individual help, observation
2:00 - 2:30	Work period - science, mathematics, language experience
2:30 - 2:45	Snack and quiet conversation time
2:45 - 3:00	Outside play
3:00 - 3:15	Story time, evaluation period
3:15 - 3: 20	Preparation for dismissal
3:20 - 3:25	Dismissal - to buses and private vehicles

The goals outlined in the Fort Myers application also provide an excellent basis for any district to develop a program:

B. LONG RANGE GOALS FOR FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

1. Help the child explore the world of people and things
2. Help the child toward self-development in: human relationships, independence, self-control and cooperation.
3. To develop conceptualization (to think and reason, classify and categorize, learn cause and effect relationships).
4. To challenge the child intellectually in areas of language, science and math and the social sciences.
5. To develop creativity in the child through a variety of experiences.
6. To give attention to the physical development and well being of the child.
7. To provide opportunity to study the child, identify his strengths and weaknesses, and work to enrich the child's program and build from his weaknesses.

C. SHORT RANGE GOALS

1. LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

   a. Sufficient practice opportunities under teacher guidance to improve conversational abilities
   b. Learn to follow oral instructions
   c. Left to right directions

d. Experience in seeking information and sharing it with others
e. Enjoyment in listening to stories, poems and books
f. Experience in creative dramatics and dramatic play
g. Ability to tell a well-known story in sequence
h. Expressing feeling and ideas in complete sentences
i. Auditory rhyming
J. Vocabulary development
k. Know and enunciate the consonant sounds, beginning blends, and an introduction to vowel sounds
l. Visual discrimination

2. SCIENCE

Development

a. Stimulate and guide children in a constantly growing understanding of the forces, phenomena, processes, materials and living things that make up a large part of the world in which they live.

b. Foster the abilities necessary for scientific thinking through problem solving: ability to see liknesses and differences, to make inferences, to see relationships, to classify and to understand and use the language of science.

c. Development of appreciation for the value of both the content and method of science.

d. Concepts to be developed:
Pets
Trees and leaves
Weather
Sounds
Animals (comparisons)
magnets
Rocks
Plants
Living things in Spring (insects and birds)
Machines

3. MATHEMATICS

a. Sets: (collection)
One-to-one correspondence
Equal sets
Equivalent sets
Subsets
Union of disjoint sets
Set separation
Empty set
Commutative property of set union

b. Counting:

(using objects) saying number names in order through one-to-one correspondence with members of a set
Cardinal numbers from number property of sets the last number names in the cardinal number of the set - cardinals thru 25
Ordinals through fifth - or further
idea of number and number-numeral distinction

c. Addition and subtraction of whole numbers

Readiness for addition and subtraction through work with grouping and regrouping (combining and separating sets of objects:
Recognize 2, 3, 4 objects in a set without counting

d. Measurement:
Clock
Calendar
Money
Inch, foot, yard
Weight

e. Fractions:
Understanding and use of terms (half, part, whole, all)
Dividing and sharing equal parts of a whole

f. Geometric concepts
Awareness of 2 and 3 demensional shapes in physical world
Recognition of cube-count the faces or flat surfaces-count the edges-count the points
Recognition of 2-dimential shapes (circle, triangle, rectangle, and their exterior and interior regions)
idea of point and line in relationship to child's environment

g. Graphs and charts:
Teacher-made charts, record keeping-temperatures, growth of plants, etc.

4. SOCIAL SEIENCES

a. Geography - maps, distance, direction, scale and symbols
(1) classroom area
(2) neighborhood area
(3) Washington area
(4) United States map
(5) World map
(6) road maps

b. Globalism
   (1) time measurement
   (2) climate of regions
   (3) seasonal changes

c. History - relationship of the long ago to present times
   (1) Columbus
   (2) Pilgrims
   (3) Indians
   (4) Pioneers
   (5) Washington - Lincoln
   (6) Present day history in the making

d. Economics
   (1) Developing concepts of jobs
   (2) Money and prices
   (3) How work is divided in labor
   (4) Families

5. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

   1. Development of good health and safety habits
   2. Experiences to help develop good muscular coordination
      a. running - jumping
      b. climbing
      c. Skipping, hopping, galloping, sliding
      d. Handling ball with ease
      e. Tumbling - rolling, somersaults

6. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

   a. Habits and Attitudes - adjustment
      1. Exerts Effort
      2. Respects Authority
      3. Is Courteous
      4. Respects Property
      5. Accepts Responsibility
      6. Shows Initiative
      7. Uses time wisely
      8. Works neatly
      9. Works accurately
      10. Exercises self-control
      11. Gets Along Well With Others
      12. Adjusting to Routine of Classroom and the School
      13. Sharing and taking Turns
      14. Moving about in orderly way

7. CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

a. Experience in handling art materials
   1. use of manipulative toys
   2. puzzles - pegboards, blocks
   3. cutting, coloring, pasting
   4. finger painting - water colors
   5. easel painting
   6. clay work
   7. work with collage
   8. puppets

b. MUSIC EXPERIENCES
   1. singing
   2. listening
   3. musical instruments
   4. rhythms
   5. creative activities

E. PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION

1. observation -
   a. keep running record on social and emotional development of each child (index cards)
   b. keep anecdotal records (without judgmental assessment) (index cards)
2. oral interviews with pupils
3. parent questionnaires
4. check lists
   a. marking progress or achievement level in regard to <u>all</u> short range goals
      (a) physical
      (b) intellectual
      (c) social and emotional
5. samples of children's work
6. test and measurements
   (a) Easel Age Scale
   (b) Reading Readiness Achievement (Betts and Welch)
   (c) Metropolitan Readiness Test
7. Sample copies
   (a) parent questionnaire
   (b) check lists for all areas

F. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

II. ESTIMATED COSTS

The Penn-Trafford School District in 1967-68 has eight and one-half kindergarten teachers caring for 341 pupils on a half-day basis. This is an average of 20 pupils in each half-day session. With this same enrollment, and assigning a maximum of 25 pupils to a teacher, we would need an additional five teachers. An estimate of costs to implement this program for the entire school district totals approximately $50,000 broken down as follows:

Rental of 4 rooms	$ 4,000
Salary of 5 teachers	30,000
Equipment for 4 rooms	8,000
Transportation (1 bus)	6,300
Miscellaneous	1,700

These additional costs would be partially offset by additional state reimbursements in the year after the program is put into effect. At present, the half-day pupil is equated to a full-day basis so that reimbursement is received for 170 pupils now, although 341 are enrolled. Under the full-day program, reimbursement would be based on the full 341 pupils.

The University of the State of New York in its brochure Organization of Kindergarten Programs states that the full-day program may not be any greater than for the half-day program:

> "Both school and community may need help in understanding the values of either the half-day or the full-day kindergarten program and in recognizing the financial obligation involved. The expense of a full-day program may not necessarily be greater than for the half-day program. Perhaps the most difficult problem for most schools is that of obtaining adequate space and personnel to prevent overcrowding and to provide a good educational experience. This involves additional expense, as does the equipment necessary for naps and lunch required by the full-day program. However, the full-day program entitles a school to the full amount of state aid allowance for each child whereas the half-day program means only one-half the allowance. The supply and maintenance costs on a per-room basis are cut in a full-day program, since the number of children using each room and its equipment is less. In some schools the cost of noontime transportation is eliminated."

III. PROS AND CONS OF THE FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN

Our study of the full-day kindergarten reveal that there are not too many programs in effect in Public School systems. The State of Hawaii established some full-day kindergartens in 1945, "and since 1955 full-day kindergartens have been an integral part of all elementary schools in the State of Hawaii," according to Mary Musgrove, Program Specialist in Kindergarten-Primary Education, Department of Education, State of Hawaii. The University of the State of New York states, "As of the fall of 1965 there were 282,462 children attending kindergarten (in the state of New York); 258,980 of these were in half-day programs and 24,482 in full-day programs." In the State of Pennsylvania only the Kutztown School District, and in Indiana County have full-day kindergartens. Response to our inquiries indicate that many persons are interested in the subject and that consideration is being given to establishing full-day programs.

In December, 1958 the Department of Public Instruction of the State of Hawaii conducted a study of the value of half-day sessions as compared to the present full-day program. This study summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of the program and is reproduced here in full:

* * * * * *

December 1958

Territory of Hawaii
Department of Public Instruction

STUDY OF VALUE OF TWO HALF-DAY SESSIONS AS COMPARED TO THE PRESENT FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Brief Summary of Returns

I. Statistics

A. Letters sent, and returns:

	No. Sent	No. of Replies As of 12-1-58
To authorities in early childhood education	24	16
To NEA Research Division	1	3
To Superintendents in New York State	4	3

B. Of the 22 letters received, 15 indicated decided approval of the full-day program, 5 had questions as to the advisability of a 6-hour session, but in each case pointed out that under certain conditions, 6 hours may be better than other alternatives available.

C. Nine of the 22 letters definitely praised the Hawaii program as described.

II. Brief summary of comments related to questions asked.

A. Advantages and disadvantages of full-day program

1. Advantages of full-day

a. Makes it possible for children to move at their own speed and to make transitions from one activity to another at their own rate.

b. Comparatively less time is spent in routine activities and in "putting away" than in half-day session.

c. If groups are kept small, teacher has time to study each individual child and provide the best possible guidance for him.

d. Supervised lunch periods provide a well-balanced meal and opportunity for conversation and to reflect on experiences of the morning's activity. "A child may make his most profound observation not at the time he is having the experience but when he is reflecting on it."

e. Supervised rest period provides relaxation needed by children of this age.

f. Child learns self-discipline through various routines and is thus better prepared for the all-day program of grade 1.

g. Teacher has more influence in helping children develop good habits of work, in a longer more relaxed session.

h. Easier to administer transportation, particularly in rural areas.

2. Disadvantages of full-day

a. Six hours away from home for five-year-old children may be a disadvantage, if conditions at home are good. Most five-year-olds still need frequent contacts with their mothers.

b. Some teachers find it difficult to handle the lunch and rest period without help.

c. It costs more than serving the same number of children in two half-day sessions.

B. Two half-day sessions are not meeting the needs of five-year-olds.

1. Some dangers or possible ill effects of two half-day sessions of 13 children each.

a. Children will be so hurried through the activities that they will not learn as well as when they can have a more leisurely program.

b. Teachers become over-fatigued and frustrated trying to provide all the experiences and guidance they feel is essential for each child.

c. Room used by two groups tends to become impersonal and "belongs" to neither group.

d. With little opportunity for on-going projects, children become discouraged and learn the habit of engaging in fragmentary tasks.

e. Teacher must be acquainted with 66 children and 120 parents. It is incomprehensible to expect the teachers to do a decent job under such conditions.

f. Afternoon children do not receive the same quality of program as do those in the morning.

2. Advantages of two-half-day sessions if groups could be kept small.

a. If groups could be kept to 20, and three hours allowed for each session, this probably would be better than a full-day with 33.

b. Experience has shown that group size steadily increases, until all the disadvantages of the large group are inherent in each session.

C. Justification for defending full-day program.

1. Cutting the program would be a serious loss in early education to the youth in the community.

2. Thoughtful educators approve the program, and the kindergarten today is rapidly tending toward a full-day's program.

3. The full-day program provides greater opportunities for the serenity and reassurances needful for children whose days might otherwise be disrupted with tensions and uncertainties.

D. Research Data.

1. No actual data was found comparing two half-day sessions and a full-day session.

2. Many pointed out the need for research and suggested that Hawaii might set up some such studies.

III. Many of the people commented favorably on our present program and urged that everything possible be done to maintain it. Many referred to a current trend, indicating the down-grading of the kindergarten program. This is primarily attributed to the two half-day sessions and the increases in class size.

* * * * * *

Reaction from other respondents to our letter of inquiry were all closely allied to the results of the Hawaiian survey.

One reaction which was common to many replies is summarized in this excerpt from a letter written by Annie L. Butler, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. "On the other hand, all day groups of children pose an even more crucial problem than half-day groups in the matter of class size. I think the children would probably be better off to have a half-day program with only twenty children enrolled than to have a full-day program with thirty or more children enrolled."

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study of kindergartens in the public education systems of the United States points out the following facts which are presented in outline form. These conclusions are, in the main, excerpted from letters and brochures received from the sources listed in the bibliography of this booklet. The majority of our respondents indicated an interest in the concept of full-day kindergartens, but reluctance to embark on the program because of (a) the break with tradition, (b) lack of proof of its feasability, (c) costs involved, and (d) transportation difficulties.

A. Kindergartens are doing a herculean job at present, but they are not effective. Evidence of this is that one cannot distinguish between the kindergarten and non-kindergarten child at the end of the first grade.

B. There seems to be a growing trend to increased time for the younger child to be in school, and an expanding interest in early-childhood education. The thoughtful educator of today are down-grading the total curriculum.

C. Historically, kindergartens began as full-day programs. The half-day program developed in response to the need to accommodate larger numbers of children.

D. The kindergarten is regarded by both teachers and parents as an "extra" which is not vital to the educational program. This shows in the off-hand way in which many adults speak of it as "only kindergarten."

E. The half-day teacher in 2½ to 3 hours is under great pressure to carry on an effective program. Neither she nor the pupils of an afternoon session can be as physically or mentally alert as is the morning group.

F. Much time in the half-day session is consumed in picking up, putting away, and dressing or undressing for out of doors.

G. Kindergarten opportunities for all children in every school district is a must if we are to have equality of education.

H. Pennsylvania at present has little more than half its eligible pupils in kindergarten programs. Only two districts, Kutztown and Marion Center, have full-day programs at present.

I. Education today gives priority in money and status to the upper grades. However, studies show that the younger the child, the more effective and lasting will be the effort to teach him. The most rapid period of growth appears to be in the first four years of life.

J. The extra time gained in a full-day program would give young children a greater opportunity for learning and development at a crucial time in their lives.

K. The development of programs for the disadvantaged in the last decade have emphasized the need for, and interest in, a broader program of early childhood education.

L. The ideal class size for kindergarten appears to be a teacher load of 20 to 25 pupils.

M. Most of today's children are ready for learning at this earlier age.

N. If a full-day program is adopted, an intensive in-service program would be needed to train the present teaching staff in the new methods, procedures and curriculum needed for a full-day kindergarten.

O. Involvement of parents and an educational program to appraise them of the new program will be a must. Opportunities must be provided for teachers and parents to more closely work together than is possible in the half-day program.

P. Kindergarten opportunity should be provided every child in our school district. This is not now possible because of transportation problems. To transport pupils on a half-day basis would be more expensive than to operate a full-day program with transportation a part of the regular bus schedule.

Q. Many problems are involved in establishing a full-day kindergarten: finances, teacher availability, space requirements, and transportation.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND POSSIBLE ALTERNATE PROGRAMS

1. Establish the full-day kindergarten throughout the school district.

2. Apply for an ESEA Title III grant for operation of the full-day kindergarten on an experimental plan for one year. If the program proves feasible, state subsidies would help pay costs after the initial year.

3. Experiment with full-day kindergarten in one or two attendance areas. Continue the half-day program in other areas.

4. Organize a parents' corps to assist teachers in language development, storytelling, and other areas of the general program.

5. Provide full transportation (noon), so that all children of the district can take advantage of the program.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

We acknowledge, with sincere thanks, the state departments of education, colleges, universities, public schools, and individuals that have been of assistance in supplying the materials used in this brochure:

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